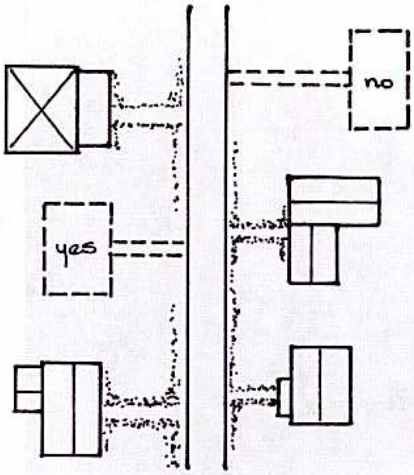
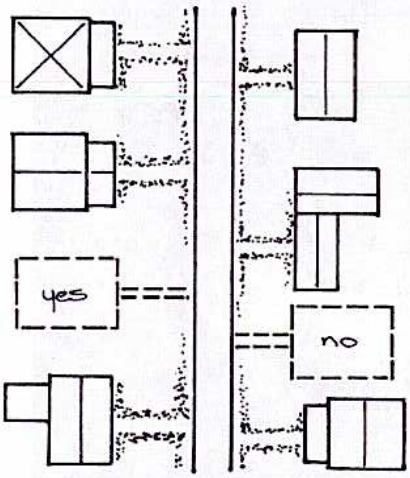
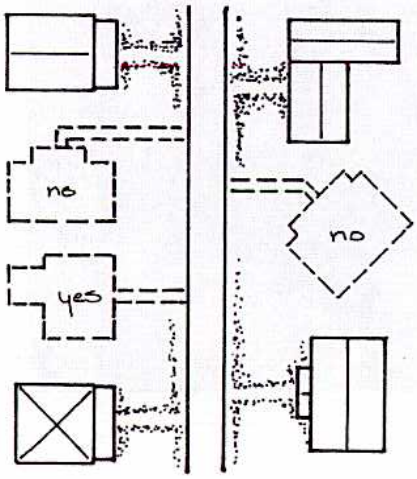
CHAPTER 3 NEW CONSTRUCTION AND ADDITIONS



The consistency of building setback from the street is a unifying district characteristic that new construction should maintain.



The siting of new construction should be consistent with the existing spacing pattern between district buildings.



Compatible new construction should adhere to the consistent orientation of the district's front facades and entrances to the street.

New Construction

New construction in the historic district is encouraged if the proposed design and siting are compatible with the district's character. When siting new construction, compatibility with existing setbacks, the spacing of buildings, and the orientation of buildings should be considered. Compatibility of proposed landscaping, lighting, paving, signage, and accessory buildings is also important.

The purpose of guidelines for new construction is not to prevent change in the historic district, but to ensure that the district's architectural and material vocabulary is respected. The height, the proportion, the roof shape, the materials, the texture, the scale, the details, and the color of the proposed building must be compatible with existing historic buildings in the district. However, compatible contemporary designs rather than historic duplications are encouraged.

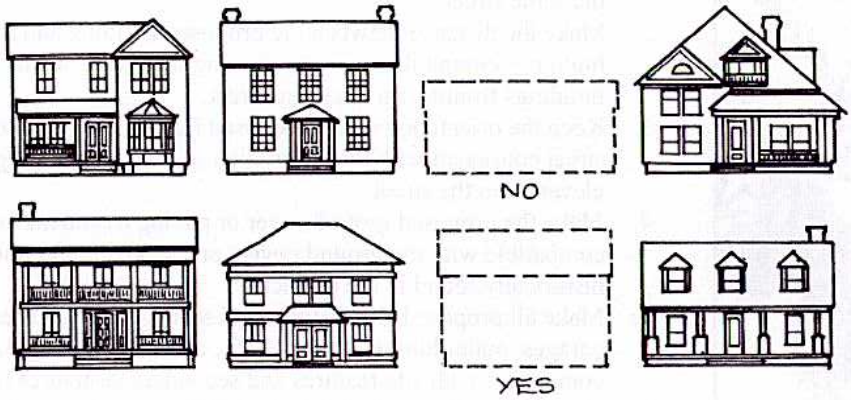
Compatible additions and decks that do not compromise the character of a historic building or destroy significant features and materials are acceptable in the district. Guidelines for additions and decks are addressed separately in this section.

New Construction: Guidelines

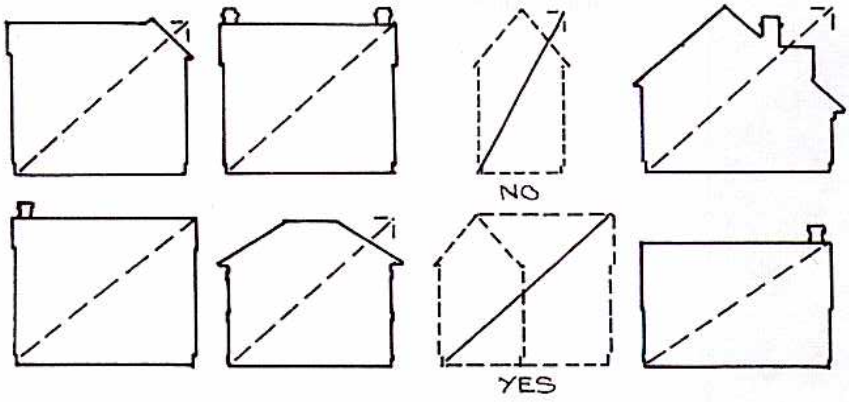
Site

1. Keep the setback of the proposed building consistent with the setback of adjacent district buildings or nearby district buildings fronting on the same street.
2. Make the distance between the proposed building and adjacent district buildings compatible with the spacing between existing district buildings fronting on the same street.
3. Keep the orientation of the proposed building's front elevation to the street consistent with the orientation of existing buildings' front elevation to the street.
4. Make the proposed ground cover or paving treatment for the site compatible with the ground covers or the paving treatments historically found in the district.
5. Make all proposed site features and secondary structures, including garages, outbuildings, fences, walls, and landscaping masses, compatible with site features and secondary structures in the district.
6. Ensure that all proposed exterior lighting and signage meet the pertinent guidelines for design.
7. Minimize disturbance of the terrain in the historic district to reduce the possibility of destroying unknown archaeological materials and habitation levels.

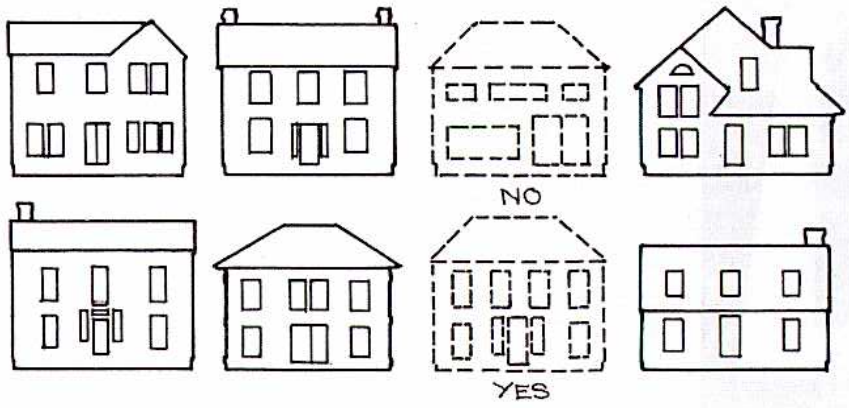
New Construction



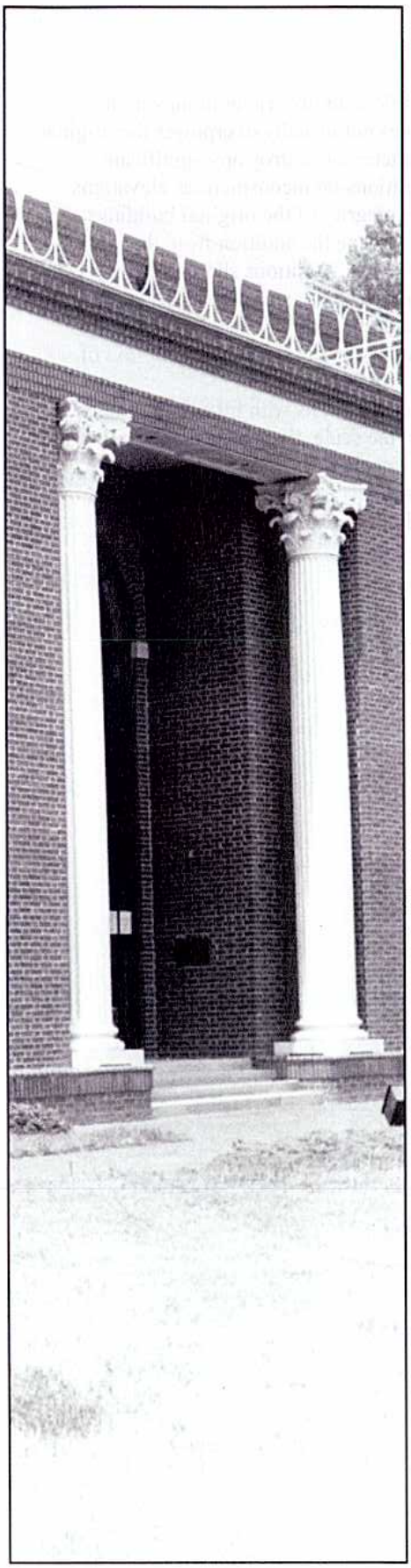
The height of new buildings in the district should be compatible with the height of historic buildings on the block or the street.



The overall front elevation proportion of new buildings should be compatible with the front elevation proportion of historic buildings in the district.



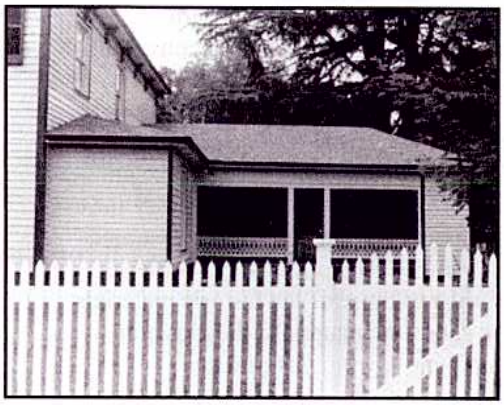
The windows and the doors in new buildings should be compatible in proportion, shape, size, and location with the windows and the doors of historic buildings in the district.



Building

1. Design the height of the proposed building to be compatible with the height of historic buildings on the block or the street, not varying more than ten percent from their average height. Generally, keep the height of new construction at or under thirty-five feet. The height of proposed features not intended for human occupancy, such as chimneys, steeples, spires, and cupolas, shall be reviewed on an individual basis.
2. Design the proportion (the ratio of the height to the width) of the proposed building's front elevation to be compatible with the proportion of contributing front elevations in the district.
3. Introduce new windows and doors that are compatible in proportion, shape, position, location, pattern, and size with windows and doors of contributing structures in the district.
4. Keep the roof shape of the proposed building consistent with roof shapes in the district: gable, hip, gambrel, flat, and mansard.
5. Keep the predominant material of the proposed building consistent with historic materials in the district: brick, stone, stucco, and wooden siding or shingles.
6. Contemporary substitute materials that closely imitate historic materials may be used on a limited basis, but should not make up the majority of the finish materials on a project. In order to qualify for use in new construction, substitute materials must have a demonstrated record of overall quality and durability. The physical properties of substitute materials must be similar to those of the historic materials they mimic. When considering substitute materials, the closer an element is to the viewer, the more closely the material and craftsmanship should match the original. The appropriateness of substitute materials shall be reviewed on an individual basis.
7. Keep the predominant texture of the proposed building consistent with the texture of materials of contributing structures in the district.
8. Make the scale (the relationship of a building's mass and details to the human figure) of the proposed building compatible with the scale of contributing structures in the district.
9. Ensure that the architectural details of the proposed building complement the architectural details of contributing structures in the district.
10. Make the exterior colors of the proposed building compatible with the natural materials and the paint colors of contributing buildings in the district, and ensure that they meet the guidelines for exterior color.
11. Contemporary construction that does not directly copy from historic buildings in the district but is compatible with them in height, proportion, roof shape, material, texture, scale, detail, and color, is strongly encouraged.

A discreet rear addition to this residence repeats details and window proportions of the original house.



This modest one-story addition takes on the appearance of an enclosed rear porch.

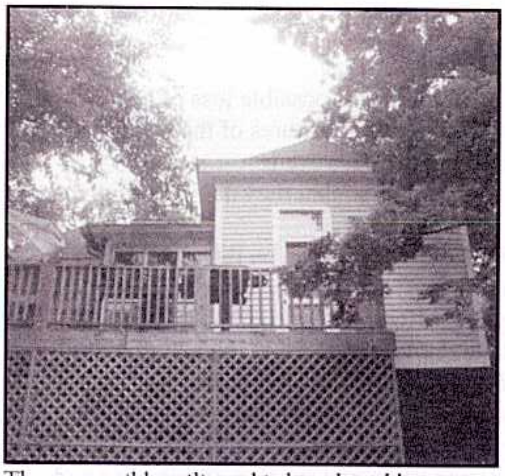
Additions

The introduction of additions compatible with historic buildings in the district is acceptable if the addition does not visually overpower the original building, compromise its historic character, or destroy any significant features and materials. By placing additions on inconspicuous elevations and limiting their size and height, the integrity of the original buildings can be maintained. It is important to differentiate the addition from the original building so that the original form is not lost. Additions should be designed so that they can be removed in the future without significant damage to the historic building or loss of historic materials. Also, as with any new construction project, the addition's impact on the site in terms of loss of important landscape features must be considered.

The compatibility of proposed additions with historic buildings will be reviewed in terms of the mass, the scale, the materials, the color, the roof form, and the proportion and the spacing of windows and doors. Additions that echo the style of the original structure and additions that introduce compatible contemporary design are both acceptable.

Additions: Guidelines

1. Construct additions so that there is the least possible loss of historic fabric. Also, ensure that character-defining features of the historic building are not obscured, damaged, or destroyed.
2. Limit the size and the scale of additions so that they do not visually overpower historic buildings.
3. Locate additions as inconspicuously as possible, on the rear or least character-defining elevation of historic buildings.
4. Design additions so that they are differentiated from the historic building. It is not appropriate to duplicate the form, the material, the style, and the detail of the historic building so closely that the integrity of the original building is lost or compromised.
5. Design additions so that they are compatible with the historic building in mass, materials, color, and proportion and spacing of windows and doors. Either reference design motifs from the historic building, or introduce a contemporary design that is compatible with the historic building.
6. For the predominant material of the addition, select a historic material, such as brick, stone, stucco, or wooden siding, that is compatible with the historic materials of the original building. Aluminum cladding, vinyl and plastic siding and details are not acceptable.
7. Contemporary substitute materials that closely imitate historic materials may be used on a limited basis, but should not make up the majority of the finish materials on a project. In order to qualify for use in new construction, substitute materials must have a demonstrated record of overall quality and durability. The physical properties of substitute materials must be similar to those of the historic materials they mimic. When considering substitute materials, the closer an element is to the viewer, the more closely the material and craftsmanship should match the original. Careful consideration should be given to the placement of substitute materials in relation to historic materials on the original structure to ensure that the transition is differentiated but not distracting or otherwise visually unattractive. Substitute materials should not result in unnecessary damage to adjacent historic materials during installation or over time. The appropriateness of substitute materials shall be reviewed on an individual basis.
8. Design the roof form to be compatible with the historic building and consistent with contributing roof forms in the historic district.
9. Make the exterior colors of the addition compatible with the natural materials and the paint colors on the historic building, and ensure that they meet the guidelines for exterior color.
10. Design the foundation height and the eave lines of additions generally to align with those of the historic building.
11. Design additions so that they can be removed in the future without damaging the historic building.
12. It is not appropriate to construct an addition that is taller than the original building.

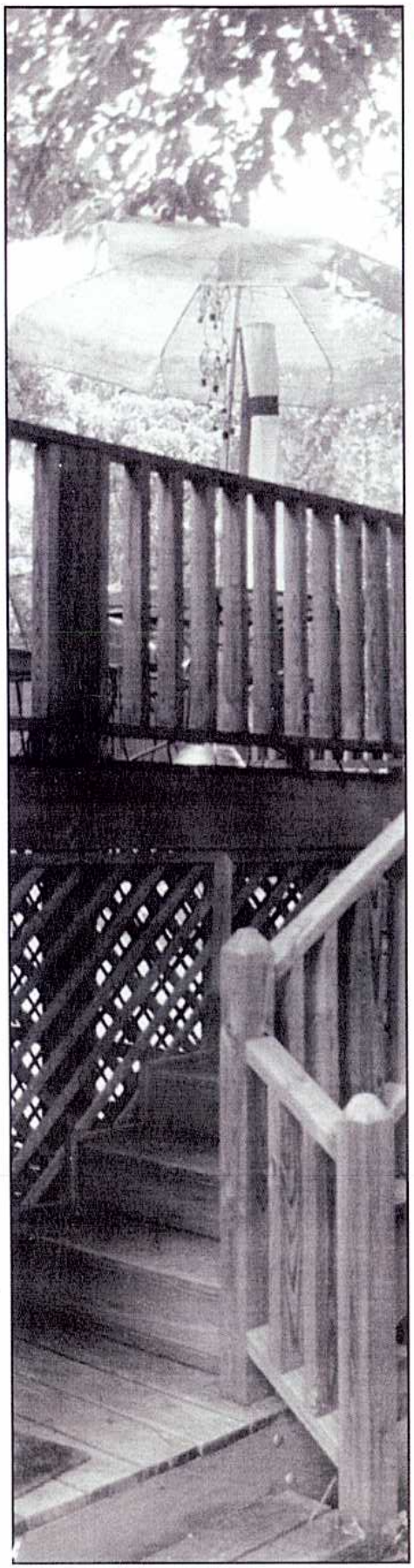


The compatible railing, skirtboard, and lattice panels of this rear deck successfully tie it to the historic house.

Decks

Contemporary sundecks are popular substitutes for more traditional patios and terraces. Compatible decks can be acceptable additions to historic buildings if they are located in inconspicuous locations and screened from public view. As with other additions, it is important not to compromise a building's historic character or damage significant features and materials through the introduction of a deck. It is also important to design decks so that they can be removed in the future without significant damage to the historic building.

The compatibility of the materials, the details, the scale, and the color of proposed decks with the existing building will be evaluated. The design of the deck's railing and the screening of its framing are both opportunities to tie the deck visually to the historic building.



Decks: Guidelines

1. Locate decks in inconspicuous areas, usually on the rear or least character-defining elevation of the historic building.
2. Screen decks from public view.
3. Design decks to be compatible in material, color, and detail with the historic building.
4. Design deck railings to be compatible in material, color, scale, and detail with the historic building.
5. Construct decks so that they can be removed in the future without damaging the historic structure.
6. Construct decks so that there is the least possible loss of historic fabric. Also, ensure that character-defining features of the historic building are not obscured, damaged, or destroyed.
7. It is not appropriate to remove significant features or elements of a historic building, such as a porch, to construct a deck.
8. It is not appropriate to use unfinished lumber or decking as the finished appearance of the deck. Paint or stain decks in colors compatible with the color of the historic building.
9. Generally, align the height of the deck with the floor level of the historic building. If applicable, install compatible skirt boards and, where appropriate, lattice panels to screen deck framing.